



Family News

April 2003

News and Information for Families of individuals at Muscatatuck SDC and Madison State Hospital during the transition to community-based services.

Supported Employment Is Working for Persons with Mental Illness in Indiana

**David V. Perkins, Ph.D.,
Ball State University**

Twenty-nine Indiana mental health centers have provided supported employment (SE) services to thousands of persons with serious mental illnesses and other disabilities (often referred to as “consumers”). Since 1993, information on the characteristics and outcomes of 4,267 of these individuals has been provided to the Supported Employment Consultation and Training (SECT) Center at the Center for Mental Health in Anderson.

The typical consumer is 37.3 years old, has lived with mental illness for 11.9 years, and has been unemployed for 2.6 years. He or she has moderately severe symptoms (e.g., deficits in communicating verbally or managing emotions, with frequent interpersonal conflicts), and is eligible for public assistance in such forms as Medicaid, Medicare, and/or the Hoosier Assurance Plan. Most consumers live either independently (43.7%) or with their families (28.2%), while some (20.8%) reside in a supervised living arrangement (e.g., semi-independent living, group home).

Effectiveness: SE services reach the intended population, and consumers are demographically similar to Indiana’s non-disabled workforce: 55.0% are male; 86.3%

FSSA Secretary Hamilton Responds to Your Questions

Q How will FSSA address the prescription drug needs of low-income Hoosier seniors with Indiana’s economic challenges?

A Governor Frank O’Bannon recently announced that the Hoosier Rx program, which provides prescription drugs for low-income seniors, will get a boost of up to \$12 million from the federal government, ensuring that any senior who is eligible and applies for assistance will get it. This federal money should reassure current recipients that their benefits aren’t going away and should encourage potential beneficiaries that there is help for them.

Anyone who thinks they may be eligible should apply. Indiana residents can call toll-free at 1-866-267-4679 or write to: HoosierRx, at P. O. Box 6224, Indianapolis, IN 46206-6224. The web site is: www.IN.gov/HoosierRx.

Indiana applied for this waiver of federal rules and is the sixth state to receive approval.

Q How much assistance will the average eligible individual receive?

A Depending on their income, seniors who are enrolled in HoosierRx may receive \$1,000, \$750 or \$500 in government-paid

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**WIN Workshop —
Person Centered Planning ...**

Designed primarily for families who have a loved one with a developmental disability and people with developmental disabilities who are receiving, or have been targeted to receive, home and community-based services from a Medicaid Waiver.

For complete information, including location, dates, and a registration form, go to:

[http://www.arcind.org/
personcenteredplanningworkshopan.htm](http://www.arcind.org/personcenteredplanningworkshopan.htm)

Trying Times

With the nation at war, FSSA offers tips for families, teachers, & counselors. Visit:

[http://www.in.gov/fssa/
servicemental/dmh/index.html](http://www.in.gov/fssa/servicemental/dmh/index.html)

or

[http://mentalhealth.samhsa.
gov/cmhs/childrenanxiety/tips.
asp](http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/childrenanxiety/tips.asp)

**Transformation of
Southeast Regional Services Center in Madison**



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are Caucasian, while 11.6% are African-American. However, SE consumers have chronic, persistent disabilities: 40.3% have a current diagnosis of schizophrenia and 27.9% a diagnosis of mood disorder (depression, bipolar disorder); 73.5% have been hospitalized for mental illness one or more times. Of those who receive at least three months of SE services, about two-thirds (65.5%) work competitively, averaging 23.6 hours of work per week (about 94.5 hours per month). The mean hourly wage for SE consumers increased steadily from \$4.95 at the close of 1995 to \$6.22 at the beginning of 2003.

The jobs consumers take fall into one of eight categories: housekeeping/cleaning, food service, retail/clerical, construction/laborer, janitorial/maintenance, outdoor/lawn care, assembly/light industry, or professional/technical. SE consumers are most often employed in food service (27.7% of consumers) or retail/clerical (22.8% of consumers) positions. Janitorial and maintenance jobs (12.3%) are also prevalent, followed by professional/technical jobs (11.1%). SE providers often discourage seasonal types of employment (outdoor/lawn care and construction/laborer), and only 1.5% of consumers hold employment in these areas.

Efficiency: The total cost of SE services to a consumer who works is approximately \$3,000. SE costs tend to be low (approximately \$200 per month) during the first 4-5 months of services as the consumer prepares to go to work, and increase (to between \$500 and \$600 per month) only during the 2-3 months it takes the typical consumer who works to achieve stable employment.

Satisfaction: Consumers and their

employers report high degrees of satisfaction with the results of participating in SE. Employers are consistently satisfied with the consumers they have hired and with the service they received from the SE staff. Consumers are satisfied with all aspects of their experience except one, the level of employment benefits they receive (e.g., health insurance, paid vacations), a finding that has remained consistent over time.

Summary: SE programs at Indiana mental health centers have successfully served individuals with severe and chronic disabilities for whom finding and keeping competitive work has been difficult. Consumers and employers are very satisfied with the program, and the cost of SE is modest compared to other mental health services.

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discounts a year and, even after they reach that maximum, they remain eligible for a pharmacy discount when they use the HoosierRx drug card. The average enrollee is a 75-year-old woman with an income of \$572 a month or less.

To be eligible for the HoosierRx program, a senior must be 65 or older, live in Indiana at least 90 days out of the last 12 months; not have prescription drug coverage through an insurance plan, Medicaid or Medicare with spend-down; and have monthly income that does not exceed \$1,011 for single people and \$1,364 for a married couple.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Hamilton".



Keep In Mind

MSDC/MSH Info Hot Line:
800-903-9822

Div. of Disability, Aging &
Rehab Services:
800-545-7763

Ombudsman: **800-622-4484**

Div. of Mental Health &
Addiction:
800-901-1133

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- Questions & Answers, with
Secretary John Hamilton

Future Issues

- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Your Ideas

**Change is not made without
inconvenience, even from worse to
better.
Richard Hooker (1554-1600)**

State of Indiana
Family and Social Services Administration
402 W. Washington St., P.O. Box 7083
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7083

«Name»

«Address»

«City, State, Zip Code»